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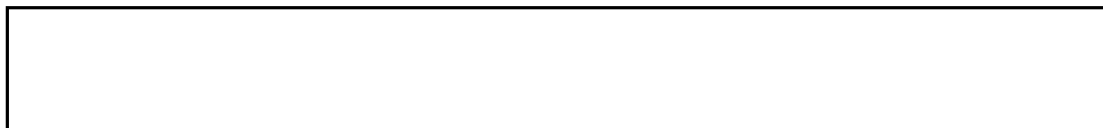
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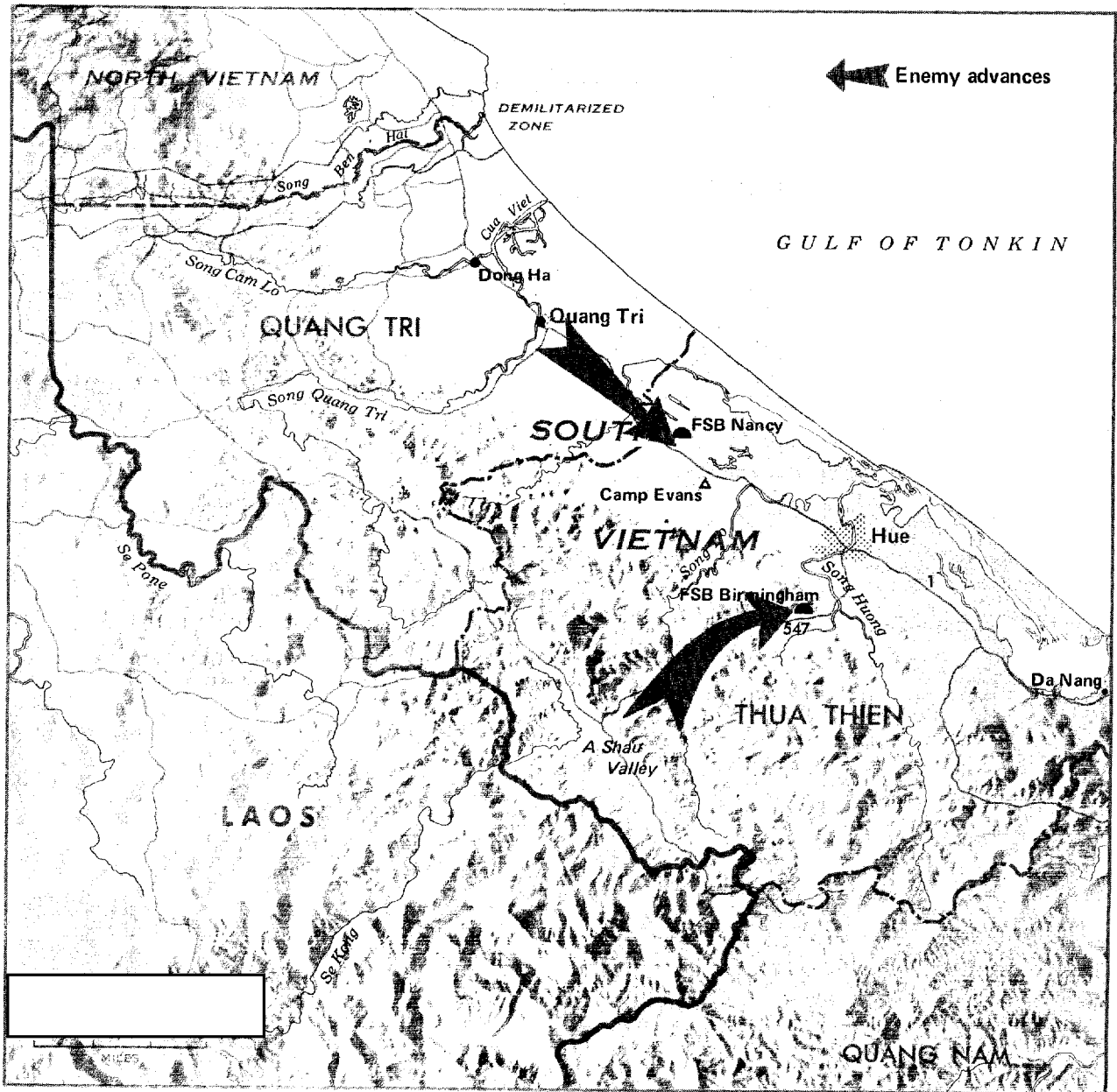


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JAPAN: Wage increases (Page 7)

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SOUTH VIETNAM: North Vietnamese forces continue to press south toward Hue.

South Vietnamese units tried to regroup at Fire Support Base Nancy yesterday, but were forced to evacuate. This was the last major allied strongpoint in Quang Tri Province. The South Vietnamese 3rd Division is now attempting to establish a new defensive line near Camp Evans, about 14 miles north of Hue, but this base is being hit hard by enemy infantry and tanks.

While the threat to Hue from the north continues to grow, aerial reconnaissance shows substantial numbers of men and armored vehicles moving east toward Hue from the A Shau Valley. Fire Base Birmingham is the only remaining South Vietnamese position on Route 547, the key road west of Hue.

Within the city, the situation is reported to be chaotic. Three quarters of the city's civil servants are said to be fleeing and refugees are jamming Route 1 to the south.

In the central provinces, Qui Nhon and Kontum cities were shelled yesterday. South Vietnamese forces abandoned another position along Route 14, leaving only one base north of Kontum in friendly hands. Government troops on the outskirts of the city are bracing for the attack that they expect at any time. These forces include regular army, airborne, Ranger, and territorial forces; the government's ability to coordinate and control such diverse elements will be an important factor in the defense of the city.

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CUBA: Fidel Castro's May Day speech broke no new ground but did clarify his travel plans.

In his speech ending the most elaborate May Day ceremonies in Havana in recent years, Castro announced that he will begin a two-month tour this week that will take him to Guinea, Algeria, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and will conclude with the Soviet Union.

Although Castro devoted most of his speech to praise for the improvements in Cuba's internal economic and social structure, he made an effort to praise Soviet foreign policy and support of Cuba, and he condemned US "international diplomacy." It is apparent from these references that the idea of a secret US-Soviet deal on Cuba still haunts him.

Castro warned that any US interference with Cuban warships that are operating against exile vessels on the high seas could bring reprisals against Guantanamo.

He concluded his speech by attacking President Nixon and stating that a US-Cuba rapprochement is not possible under the present circumstances.

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LIBERIA: Monrovia has agreed to exchange ambassadors with Bucharest, highlighting President Tolbert's determination to broaden Liberia's foreign policies.

Until the agreement with Romania was announced this week, Yugoslavia was the only Communist state with which Liberia maintained full diplomatic ties. Moscow has regularly sought an exchange of ambassadors since its first approach in 1956. At that time the late President Tubman agreed in principle to such an exchange, but he subsequently found excuses to delay action. The Soviets again have raised the matter since Tolbert came to power last July. For his part, Tolbert has encouraged greater informal contacts with the USSR in recent months.

The Tolbert administration has a more modern outlook than its predecessor and wants both to modify the rigid anti-Communism that has characterized Liberian policies in the past and to acquire "new windows on the world."

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Tolbert has recently sought assurances of continuing US aid, and he may see his growing contacts with Communist states as a means of eliciting greater concern for Liberia in Washington. Given the deep suspicions of Communist powers held by leaders of the Liberian establishment, the process is not likely to be rapid or sweeping, however.

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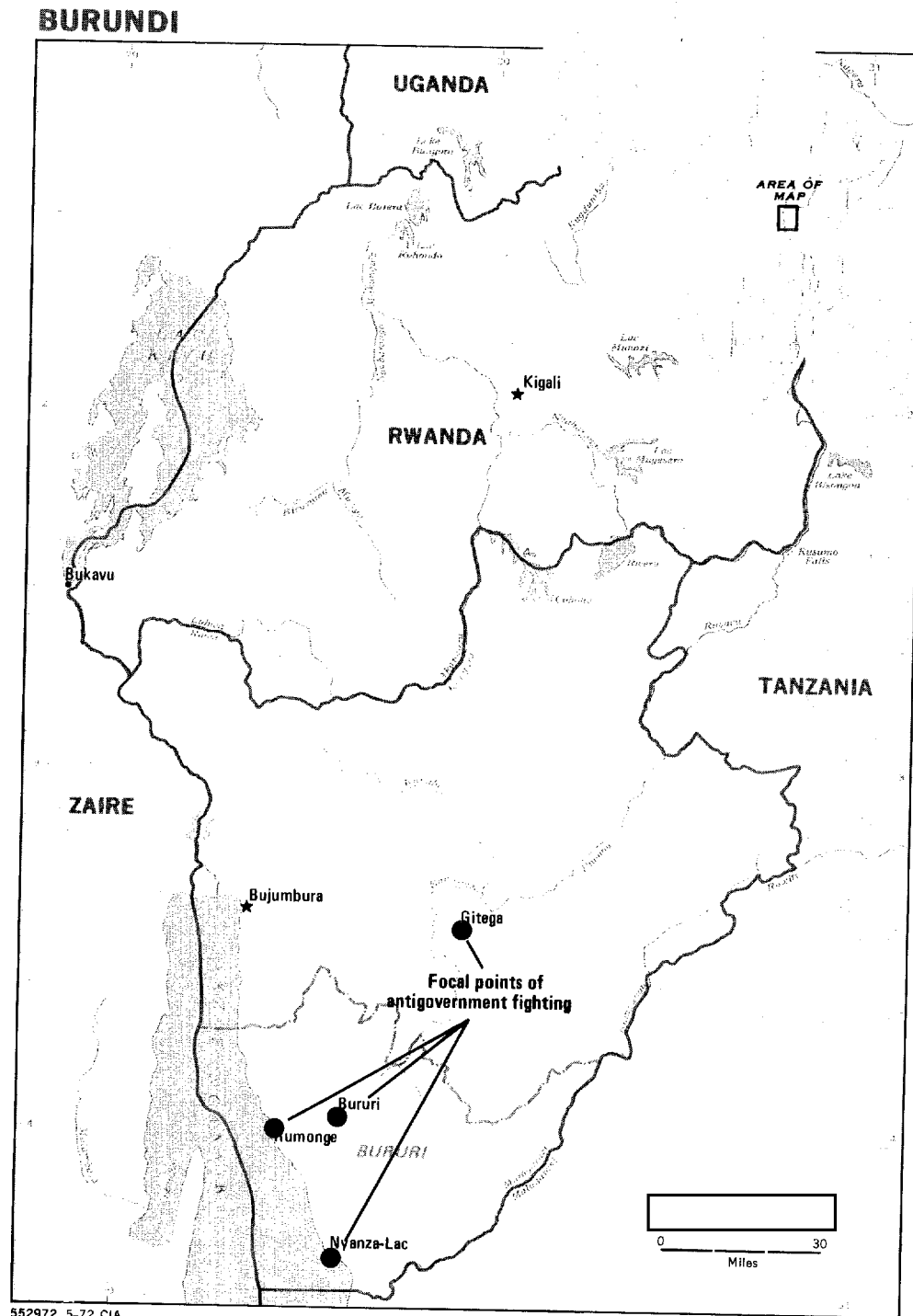
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BURUNDI: Tension remains high following a weekend of violence in southern Burundi. (Although the government of President Micombero apparently remains in control, a prolonged crisis seems likely.)

The acting foreign minister, who briefed foreign ambassadors on 2 May, alleged that antigovernment forces attacked population centers and army garrisons over the weekend "from two neighboring countries," a charge thus far not substantiated. He claimed that the government was in complete control and attributed the violence to deep-rooted tribal antagonism. [REDACTED]

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The Tutsi-dominated government holds the Hutu majority responsible for the fighting in Burundi, although it has not yet made public charges. Nevertheless, a number of ranking Hutu party, cabinet, and army officials have been arrested since the violence broke out. Micombero advocates conciliation with the Hutus, although he has systematically excluded them from power. Many of his government colleagues always have urged a hard line in order to prevent a possible Hutu take-over. A widespread move against the Hutus could trigger general intertribal warfare, seriously challenging the government's ability to contain the violence. [REDACTED]

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JAPAN: The annual spring push for higher wages is nearing an end. The country's largest transportation strike in years ended last week half way through its scheduled 48-hour period when the railroad workers agreed to wage increases averaging around 14.6 percent. A number of other tradesmen, including seamen and electricians, have not yet come to terms, but settlements probably will proceed smoothly. Thus far, wage hikes have exceeded official predictions for this recession year, suggesting that management is more concerned with maintaining labor stability than controlling costs. [REDACTED]

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